

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

JOSEPH ANTHONY CASTRO,
Plaintiff,
v.
PATRICK COVELLO, et al.,
Defendants.

No. 2:24-cv-0928 CKD P

ORDER

Plaintiff is a state prisoner proceeding pro se and seeking relief pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983. This proceeding was referred to this court by Local Rule 302 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1).

Plaintiff requests leave to proceed in forma pauperis. As plaintiff has submitted a declaration that makes the showing required by 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a), his request will be granted. Plaintiff is required to pay the statutory filing fee of \$350.00 for this action. 28 U.S.C. §§ 1914(a), 1915(b)(1). By separate order, the court will direct the appropriate agency to collect the initial partial filing fee from plaintiff's trust account and forward it to the Clerk of the Court. Thereafter, plaintiff will be obligated for monthly payments of twenty percent of the preceding month's income credited to plaintiff's prison trust account. These payments will be forwarded by

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1 the appropriate agency to the Clerk of the Court each time the amount in plaintiff's account
2 exceeds \$10.00, until the filing fee is paid in full. 28 U.S.C. § 1915(b)(2).

3 The court is required to screen complaints brought by prisoners seeking relief against a
4 governmental entity or officer or employee of a governmental entity. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(a). The
5 court must dismiss a complaint or portion thereof if the prisoner has raised claims that are legally
6 "frivolous or malicious," that fail to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, or that seek
7 monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1),(2).

8 A claim is legally frivolous when it lacks an arguable basis either in law or in fact.
9 Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 325 (1989); Franklin v. Murphy, 745 F.2d 1221, 1227-28 (9th
10 Cir. 1984). The court may, therefore, dismiss a claim as frivolous where it is based on an
11 indisputably meritless legal theory or where the factual contentions are clearly baseless. Neitzke,
12 490 U.S. at 327. The critical inquiry is whether a constitutional claim, however inartfully
13 pleaded, has an arguable legal and factual basis. See Jackson v. Arizona, 885 F.2d 639, 640 (9th
14 Cir. 1989); Franklin, 745 F.2d at 1227.

15 In order to avoid dismissal for failure to state a claim a complaint must contain more than
16 "naked assertions," "labels and conclusions" or "a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause
17 of action." Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555-557 (2007). In other words,
18 "[t]hreadbare recitals of the elements of a cause of action, supported by mere conclusory
19 statements do not suffice." Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009). Furthermore, a claim
20 upon which the court can grant relief has facial plausibility. Twombly, 550 U.S. at 570. "A
21 claim has facial plausibility when the plaintiff pleads factual content that allows the court to draw
22 the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged." Iqbal, 556 U.S.
23 at 678. When considering whether a complaint states a claim upon which relief can be granted,
24 the court must accept the allegations as true, Erickson v. Pardus, 551 U.S. 89, 93-94 (2007), and
25 construe the complaint in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, see Scheuer v. Rhodes, 416
26 U.S. 232, 236 (1974).

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1 The court has reviewed plaintiff's complaint and finds that it fails to state a claim upon
2 which relief can be granted under federal law. Plaintiff's complaint must be dismissed. The
3 court will, however, grant leave to file an amended complaint.

4 In his amended complaint, plaintiff must allege in specific terms how each named
5 defendant is involved. There can be no liability under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 unless there is some
6 affirmative link or connection between a defendant's actions and the claimed deprivation. Rizzo
7 v. Goode, 423 U.S. 362 (1976). Plaintiff cannot state a claim against a "Doe" defendant and
8 plaintiff's allegations against Warden Covello do not adequately allege that he took any action
9 amounting to a violation of plaintiff's federal rights.

10 In his complaint, plaintiff asserts a violation of California law, but plaintiff fails to plead
11 compliance with the California Tort Claims Act. Plaintiff is informed that before he may proceed
12 on a claim arising under California law in this court he must comply with the terms of the
13 California Tort Claims Act, and then plead compliance. See Cal. Gov't Code § 910 et seq.;
14 Mangold v. Cal. Pub. Utils. Comm'n, 67 F.3d. 1470, 1477 (9th Cir. 1995). Complaints must
15 present facts demonstrating compliance, rather than simply conclusions suggesting as much.
16 Shirk v. Vista Unified School Dist., 42 Cal.4th 201, 209 (2007).

17 Finally, plaintiff is informed that the court cannot refer to a prior pleading in order to
18 make plaintiff's amended complaint complete. Local Rule 220 requires that an amended
19 complaint be complete in itself without reference to any prior pleading.

20 In accordance with the above, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

- 21 1. Plaintiff's request for leave to proceed in forma pauperis (ECF No. 2) is granted.
- 22 2. Plaintiff is obligated to pay the statutory filing fee of \$350.00 for this action. All fees
23 shall be collected and paid in accordance with this court's order to the Director of the California
24 Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation filed concurrently herewith.
- 25 3. Plaintiff's complaint is dismissed.
- 26 4. Plaintiff is granted thirty days from the date of service of this order to file an amended
27 complaint that complies with the requirements of the Civil Rights Act, the Federal Rules of Civil
28 Procedure, and the Local Rules of Practice. The amended complaint must bear the docket

number assigned this case and must be labeled "Amended Complaint." Failure to file an amended complaint in accordance with this order will result in a recommendation that this action be dismissed.

Dated: April 4, 2024



CAROLYN K. DELANEY
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

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